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FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF THE PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION

Written statement submitted by International Educational Development/Humanitarian Law Project, a non-governmental organization on the Roster

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV)

[25 February 1995]

1. International Educational Development/Humanitarian Law Project welcomes the attention given by the Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Francis M. Deng, to the situation of the internally displaced persons in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Since the representative's joint mission in 1992 with the Special Rapporteur he has continued to monitor the situation, as reflected in his latest report to the Commission (E/CN.4/1995/50, paras. 72-79). We would like to provide some additional information covering the period August 1994 to the present.

2. There are now nearly 390,000 war-displaced in Croatia, of whom about 200,000 have fled Serbian-occupied portions of Croatia, and about 180,000 have fled Bosnia and Herzegovina. Displaced people include ethnic Hungarians, Romany people, Bosnian Muslims and Croats.

3. Displacement has escalated in 1994 and in early 1995. On 24 February 1995, Serbian forces in Bosnia and Herzogovina routed and expelled Croatians from their homes in Teslic and Bugojno.

4. As of December 1994, people were still being driven out of the UNPA zones of Croatia, bringing the total since 1992 to more than 13,500. United Nations vehicles drove many of them to safer places.

5. At the present time, only about 22 per cent of displaced persons in Croatia are provided for by the Croatian Government, mainly in hotels, vacation houses, military barracks and specially built centres. Fortunately, more of the remaining displaced are housed with private persons - in some cases families of the displaced. The financial drain on both the Government and on private persons is overwhelming.

6. The severe problem of providing for displaced persons is compounded by an influx of nearly 900 persons a month from Bosnia and Herzogovina, especially of late from Banja Luka, Prijedor, Sanski Most and Bosanska Gradiska.

7. Besides housing and subsistence needs, the majority of displaced persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia are in need of post-traumatic stress treatment and other psychological care. Orphaned children and the elderly are now especially vulnerable.

8. While some Serbian people have been resettled in their homes, practically no non-Serbians have been resettled. Furthermore, there is no current plan for their resettlement. IED/HLP urges the United Nations bodies and specialized agencies to work with the Representative of the Secretary-General to develop a coordinated plan for resettlement so that as soon as conditions allow, displaced persons may be returned to their homes with a minimum of delay and confusion.

9. IED/HLP recognizes the efforts of a number of Governments and international humanitarian organizations that have provided material aid for the displaced in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. However, the need is still far greater than the aid, and we make an appeal to these and others to increase aid.